

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method of manufacturing a shoe, the method
2 comprising:
3 providing a shoe upper; and
4 attaching an outsole having a ground contacting surface to the shoe
5 upper, the outsole being formed by:
6 inserting a section of fabric material into a mold;
7 injecting a first material into the mold and operating the first
8 mold to form the outsole,
9 wherein the outsole includes a first section formed of the
10 first material and a second section formed of the fabric material, the second
11 section being exposed to the ground contracting surface of the outsole, and
12 wherein the first section is free of any fabric material.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the fabric material is a
2 nonwoven fabric.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the fabric
2 material is bonded to the first material which comprises a thermoplastic rubber.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the mold includes one or
2 more recessed sections for receiving fabric material, the injected first material
3 being injected so as to cover the exposed face of the fabric material.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the second section permits
2 classification under the Harmonized Tariff Schedule at a tariff rate lower than a
3 shoe having a ground contacting surface that is free of the second section.

4 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the mold is operated in one
5 of a hot state in which mold dies are heated prior to injecting the first material
6 and a cold state in which the mold dies are free of any heating prior to injecting
the first material.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the mold includes a first die
2 and a second die, the first die including one or more recessed sections for
3 receiving the fabric material that has been cut into shapes that complement the
4 shape of the one or more recessed sections, the first and second dies defining a
5 cavity when the first and second dies are closed, the cavity being in the
6 dimension and shape of the resulting molded outsole.

1 8. A method of constructing and ordering a shoe through a
2 distributed computer network, comprising the steps of:
3 receiving user input of a selected shoe outsole construction;
4 generating a list of complementary uppers adapted to be attached to
5 the outsole to form the shoe, the list including at least one entry representing at
6 least one upper construction;
7 displaying the list;
8 receiving user input of a selected upper construction from the list;
9 and
10 receiving transaction information from the user as to purchase of
11 the selected outsole and upper constructions.

1 9. The method of claim 8, including the additional step of
2 displaying a graphic image of the selected upper and the selected outsole in an
3 attached state.

1 10. The method of claim 8, wherein the method steps are
2 performed by a programmed computer connected to the distributed computer
3 network.

1 11. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of displaying the
2 list includes graphically displaying each of the upper constructions contained in
3 the list.

1 12. The method of claim 8, including the step of displaying a list
2 of available shoe outsole constructions prior to receiving the user input of the
3 selected outsole.

1 13. The method of claim 8, wherein the list includes a plurality of
2 upper constructions that are configured to complementarily mate with the
3 selected outsole.

1 14. A shoe kit permitting construction of a plurality of different
2 shoes, the kit comprising:
3 a plurality of shoe uppers; and
4 a plurality of outsoles, each outsole formed as a molded member in
5 a mold, the plurality of outsoles being formed independently from the plurality of
6 shoe uppers, each of the outsoles being configured to be matingly attached to
7 two or more of the uppers, the outsole being attached to the upper outside of
8 the mold.

1 15. The shoe kit of claim 14, wherein the outsole has a ground
2 contacting surface which includes a first section and a second section, the first
3 section being formed of a first material and the second section having an outer
4 layer formed of a fabric material, wherein the first section is free of any fabric
5 material.

1 16. The shoe kit of claim 15, wherein the fabric material is free of
2 contact with the first section.

1 17. The shoe kit of claim 15, wherein the second section
2 further includes a backing layer formed of a second material, the fabric material
3 of the outer layer being connected to the backing layer to define an integral
4 assembly and wherein only the backing layer of the integral assembly contacts
5 the first material.

1 18. The shoe kit of claim 17, wherein the backing layer and the
2 first material are made of the same material.

1 19. The shoe kit of claim 15, wherein the fabric material is a
2 non-woven fabric material.

1 20. The shoe kit of claim 15, wherein the second section
2 occupies a portion of the ground contacting surface sufficient to permit
3 classification under subheading 6405.20.90 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule
4 of the United States.

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